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TAGS: [KSCA](#) [TSPL](#) [PGOV](#) [PRIL](#) [PTER](#) [ECON](#) [ECPS](#) [SOCI](#) [IN](#)
SUBJECT: India Pursues Homeland Security Technologies

REF: New Delhi 2007

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: During a spirited discussion at an October 9 Federation of India Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)- hosted conference on Science and Technology (S&T) for Homeland Security, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) Secretary G.K. Pillai acknowledged the need for changes to make the government of India (GOI) as adaptable as the terrorists it is facing. Secretary Pillai highlighted Indian market opportunities in the security technologies sector, and his hopes to link industry with the end users that need its products. Recent MHA and Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) activities suggest this is a growing market and a ripe opportunity for U.S. engagement. However, Post notes that technology advances will have limited effect on preventing terrorism if India fails to effectively address policy and procedural deficiencies as well. END SUMMARY.

MHA LOOKS TO TECHNOLOGY FOR COUNTERTERRORISM SOLUTIONS

¶2. (U) Secretary Pillai said at the FICCI-sponsored event that the terrorism threat in India is huge and that India faces a deteriorating security environment. He announced that the Government has several big projects underway, including establishing the National Intelligence Grid and upgrading the "NIC" (Note: he did not provide any further information on this organization. End note) into a National Counter-Terrorism Center, but said that there is still a long way to go because India is dealing with an adversary that is equally as smart and much more adaptable. He noted that the government is not technology savvy, that the procurement process is cumbersome and ineffective, that technology rarely makes it into operational use, and that the MHA is just now coming to grips with how to update its procurement process to take advantage of new technologies.

¶3. (U) While the Indian market for security technologies is huge, the challenge is to effectively match industry and end users to produce products tailored for "the Indian situation." To address

this, Secretary Pillai said he has instructed the police and paramilitary forces to set up dedicated technology wings to identify their current and future technology-related needs. He also announced the establishment of a task force to be headed by former MHA Secretary Mr. Madhukar Gupta that will figure out how to link industry and government. Secretary Pillai's remarks followed presentations by Mr. Gupta and Mr. Sushil Jiwarajka (Chairman of FICCI's Innovation Committee) which enumerated the terrorist attacks in India over the last several years, pointed to the 26/11 attack in Mumbai as a "wake up call" for the government, and decried India's lack of security-related technologies as a surmountable obstacle to a more secure country. He also followed presentations by Mr. Steve Swain (Security Innovation Technology Consortia, UK) and Mr. Avi Shavit (Head of Homeland Security, Israeli Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor) on how the UK and Israel have addressed the issue of technology for homeland security.

INEFFECTIVE POLICIES AS MUCH A BARRIER AS MISSING TECHNOLOGIES

¶4. (U) In a vibrant and spirited discussion, participants were not shy in sharing their experiences with security technologies. Delhi Police Joint Commissioner Mr. Karnal Singh provided several examples of government technological ineptitude. He cited a particular case in which he tried to exploit a mobile phone and was told by MHA that it was technologically impossible but when he contacted the phone company directly, company officials said that they had the necessary software there to do it immediately. A Bangalore police official said that the technology and training being discussed was not passed down to the working level, and that his police station did not even have an Internet connection, for example. He called on the MHA to

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provide the constabularies with more training and access to basic technologies. This point was echoed by an unidentified audience member who said police training in India is very poor, and that the entire police training system needed to be overhauled to provide better and more frequent training if police were to effectively respond to a terrorist attack. An Indian border agent pointed out that his unit was testing several new technologies for video and thermal surveillance, but had so far found that all of them were designed for indoor use and not suitable for the border environment.

Mr. Ted Collins, President of Interact Public Safety Solutions, Pvt. Ltd, noted that if India waits for the government to find the solutions, it won't happen; solutions and innovations will come from partnerships between private companies.

¶5. (U) Captain Raghu Raman, CEO of Mahindra Special Services Group, pointed out that destroying the terrorists doesn't solve the larger problem of terrorism. The key focus must be on identifying, before an event ever happens, the people who create and control terrorists.

Commissioner Singh said that oftentimes the police know who these people are, including their phone numbers, addresses and car license numbers, but that they are not allowed to do anything about it. Mr. Raman responded that technology must emerge from doctrine, and that the government must put in place policies that will address the root causes of terrorism because technologies themselves will not fix this problem. Mr. Collins, agreed, noting that no technology would ever replace good basic police work.

THE FUTURE OF AIRPORT SECURITY

¶6. (U) Mr. Praveen Khandelwal, Deputy General Manager (IT) of the Airports Authority of India described his efforts to secure airports through the integration of all airport computer systems into a single Airport Operation Control Center (AOCC). He said that AOCC will bring together all airport systems - from access control to building management to passenger manifests - and will require a significant change in the business process as well as a great deal of employee retraining and new roles for airport managers. The agreement to implement the system in the first two airport test beds of Kolkata and Chennai has been finalized, though his said his staff plans to finish defining the new business model before the AOCC is implemented.

COMMENT

¶7. (SBU) The MHA and MoST have recently begun to express a strong interest in collaboration on security technologies (REFTEL.) ESTOff was told at this conference that the MoST is preparing to announce a new funding initiative for security technologies to stimulate this type of research. Industry clearly sees great opportunity in this sector but, as Secretary Pillai pointed out, the government bureaucracy is not well poised to take advantage of the opportunity.

Technology advancements will not by themselves solve the GOI's lack of appropriate counterterrorism policy, poor coordination between agencies, and chronic lack of training for first responders. Regardless, it is a step in the right direction and presents an opportunity both for grass-roots implementation of security capabilities and for engagement by U.S. businesses. END COMMENT.

Roemer